

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 02754 171024Z

21

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R 170904Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4196

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 2754

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PORS, MILI, CH

SUBJ: MILITIA--A PILLAR OF THE DICTATORSHIP

REF: A) HONG KONG 2491; B) HONG KONG A-33

1. THE PEOPLE'S MILITIA IS NOW COMING TO THE FORE IN THE DICTATORSHIP CAMPAIGN AS A PRIMARY TOOL FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF LAW AND ORDER (REF B). THIS IS HIGHLIGHTED IN A RECENT (MARCH 13) TSINGHAI BROADCAST WHICH TOUCHED ON ALL THE CURRENT THEMES OF MILITIA BUILDING.

2. IN ITS FIRST PROVINCIAL MILITIA MEETING SINCE THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, TSINGNHAI CALLED FOR "GIVING FURTHER PLAY TO THE MILITIA'S ROLE IN CONSOLIDATING THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" AND REPEATED CHANG CHUN-CHIAO'S NPC DEFINITION OF THE MILITIA AS A "PILLAR OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT." THE OPENING ADDRESS WAS DELIVERED BY TSINGHAI MILITARY DISTRICT COMMANDER CHANG CHIANG-LIN, WHO TOUCHED ALL BASES IN ALIGNING MILITIA BUILDING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE NPC, STRENGTHENING UNITY, AND CONTRIBUTING TO A "NEW LEAP FORWARD." CHANG ALSO REFERRED BACK TO SHANGHAI AS THE RURAL AS WELL AS URBAN MODEL IN "ARMING" AND
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PAGE 02 HONG K 02754 171024Z

"REMOLDING" THE MILITIA (SHANGHAI USED THE MILITIA LAST YEAR

TO SUPPRESS CRITICISM AND SUPPORT LOCAL AUTHORITY).

3. TSINGHAI'S MILITIA MEETING POINTS BACK TO ONE RECENTLY CONVENED BY THE HUPEH MILITARY DISTRICT WHICH TOUCHED ON SIMILAR THEMES AND CALLED FOR THE DESPATCH OF MILITIA SQUADS INTO THE STREETS (REF A). HARBIN, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HARBIN GARRISON COMMAND (FEBRUARY 25 BROADCAST), AND URUMCHI (FEBRUARY 22 BROADCAST) HAVE ALSO SENT MILITIA INTO THE STREETS TO CONSOLIDATE THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. IN AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT, WE NOTE THAT IN SHANGHAI, WHERE MILITIA INDEPENDENCE FROM THE MILITARY WAS EARLIER STRESSED, JOINT PATROLLING IS NOW HELD UP FOR EMULATION (NCNA DOMESTIC SERVICE MARCH 2).

4. COMMENT: ON ITS PRESENT TRACK, THE DICTATORSHIP CAMPAIGN WILL TEST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MILITIA. POTENTIAL WEAKNESS INCLUDES CONTROL OF WEAPONS, THE USE OF MILITIA FOR FACTIONAL STRUGGLE (WHICH HAS HAPPENED WITH SERIOUS EFFECT IN CHEKIANG), AND LEADERSHIP GENERALLY. THESE WEAKNESSES ARE APPARENTLY TO BE CORRECTED THROUGH SUPERVISION BY THE PLA, WHOSE PROFILE IN MILITIA AFFAIRS IS NOW THE HIGHEST IT HAS BEEN SINCE THE FALL OF LIN PIAO. SUCH PLA INVOLVEMENT HAS ITS OWN POTENTIAL FOR CONTROVERSY IN THE UNENDED RIVALRY AND CONTENTION BETWEEN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN GROUPS.
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